

Japanese Cheat Sheet

Formal Verb Forms

Present/Future Tense	~I + masu
Past Tense	~I + mashita
Progressive Tense	~TE + imasu
Negative Present/Future	~I + masen
Negative Past Tense	~I + masen deshita
Command Form	~TE + kudasai

△ ~I + nasai
(very rude)

Negative Command ~A + naide kudasai

Potential Form ~E + masu
= can/able to SURU → dekimasu

Want to... ~I + tai desu

Don't want to... ~I + takunai desu

Let's... ~I + mashou

Passive Form (U-Verbs) ~A + remasu
= to be finished (RU-Verbs) ~A + raremasu
SURU → saremasu
KURU → koraremasu

Causative Form (U-Verbs) ~A + semasu
= to allow + to (verb) (RU-Verbs) ~A + sasemasu
= to force + to (verb)
SURU → sasemasu
KURU → kosasemasu

Informal Verb Forms

Present/Future Tense	~U	㊦
Past Tense	~TA	㊦
Progressive Tense	~TE + iru	㊦
Negative Present/Future	~A + nai	㊦
Negative Past Tense	~A + nakatta	㊦
Command Form	~TE	

△ SURU → SHIRO (TE-Verbs) ~E
KURU → KOI (RU-Verbs) ~I + ro

Negative Command ~A + naide

△ ~U + na

Potential Form ~E + ru ㊦

SURU → dekiru

Want to... ~I + tai ㊦

Don't want to... ~I + takunai ㊦

Let's... ~O + u ㊦

Passive Form (U-Verbs) ~A + reru ㊦

(RU-Verbs) ~A + rareru

SURU → sareru

KURU → korareru

Causative Form (U-Verbs) ~A + seru ㊦

(RU-Verbs) ~A + saseru

SURU → saseru

KURU → kosaseru

Neutral Verb Forms

If... ~E + ba	If not... ~A + nakereba
~U + to	~A + nai to
~TA + ra	~A + nakattara

Must/have to... ~A + nai to ikenai
~A + nakereba ikenai

After... ~TE + kara

~TA + ra

Before... ㊦ + mae ni

Because... ㊦ + kara

㊦ + node

In order to... ~U + tame ni

While... (at the same time) ~I + nagara

Even (if)... ~TE + mo

Try to... to do and see (the result) ~TE + minu

to make an effort ~O + u to suru

Must not... ~TE + wa ikenai

To do in advance... ~TE + oku

To do too much... ~I + sugiru

To do... and so on... ~TA + ri + suru

Seem to want to... ~TA + garu

COMBINATION VERB ~I + VERB 2

STRINGING PHRASES ~TE + PHRASE 2

Conjugating Verbs

U-VERB	~	RU-VERB	SURU	~	KURU	U-VERB TE/TA ENDINGS
hana.sa	A	tabe.	shi	A	ko	~ TE TA
hana.shi	I	tabe.	shi	I	ki	U, TSU, RU tte tta
hana.su	U	tabe.ru	suru	U	kuru	BU, MU, NU nde nda
hana.se	E	tabe.re	sure	E	kore	KU ite ita
hana.so	O	tabe.yo	shiyo	O	koyo	GU ide ida
	TE	tabe.te	shite	TE	kite	SU shite shita
	TA	tabe.ta	shita	TA	kita	

EXCEPTIONS → iku (to go) in TE/TA-form becomes i.tte/i.ta
→ The A-form ending for verbs ending in う(u) is わ (wa)

U-VERBS (THAT LOOK LIKE RU-VERBS) iru (to need), hairu (to enter), shiru (to know), kiru (to cut)
kaeru (to go home), suberu (to slide), keru (to kick)

Forms of de aru (to be)

	FORMAL	INFORMAL
Present Tense	desu	da ㊦
Past Tense	deshita	datta ㊦
Probable	deshou	△ darou
Negative Present Tense	de wa arimasen	ja nai ㊦
Negative Past Tense	de wa arimasen deshita	ja nakatta ㊦
Negative Probable	de wa nai deshou	△ ja nai darou

△ darou is very masculine and direct. In most cases, it is better to use deshou.

㊦ When made into a noun, da changes to na with no, and de aru with koto.

Adjectives

I-ADJECTIVES	NA-ADJECTIVES
haya.i fast ㊦	genki na cheerful ㊦
haya.sa speed ㊦	genki cheer ㊦
haya.ku quickly ㊦	genki ni cheerfully ㊦
haya.kute fast and... ㊦	genki de cheerful and... ㊦
haya.katta was fast ㊦	
haya.kunai not fast ㊦	
haya.kunakatta wasn't fast ㊦	
haya.kereba if fast ㊦	
haya.kunakereba if not fast ㊦	
haya.sugiru too fast ㊦	

Adjectives that end in い (i) are I-Adjectives, except where the final い is part of a kanji.

EASILY CONFUSED NA-ADJECTIVES

きれいだ (綺麗 / beautiful)

ていねいだ (丁寧 / polite)

ふこうはいだ (不公平 / unequal)

Caution!

SO	N
ソ	ン
TSU	SHI
ツ	シ

Hiragana

あ	か	が	さ	ざ	た	だ	な	は	ば	ぱ	ま	や	ら	わ
A	KA	GA	SA	ZA	TA	DA	NA	HA	BA	PA	MA	YA	RA	WA
い	き	ぎ	し	じ	ち	ぢ	に	ひ	び	ぴ	み		り	
I	KI	GI	SHI	Ji	CHI	Ji	NI	HI	BI	PI	MI		RI	
う	く	ぐ	す	ず	つ	づ	ぬ	ふ	ぶ	ぷ	む	ゆ	る	ん
U	KU	GU	SU	ZU	TSU	ZU	NU	FU	BU	PU	MU	YU	RU	N
え	け	げ	せ	ぜ	て	で	ね	へ	べ	ぺ	め		れ	
E	KE	GE	SE	ZE	TE	DE	NE	HE	BE	PE	ME		RE	
お	こ	ご	そ	ぞ	と	ど	の	ほ	ぼ	ぽ	も	よ	ろ	を
O	KO	GO	SO	ZO	TO	DO	NO	HO	BO	PO	MO	YO	RO	WO

Katakana

ア	カ	ガ	サ	ザ	タ	ダ	ナ	ハ	バ	パ	マ	ヤ	ラ	ワ
A	KA	GA	SA	ZA	TA	DA	NA	HA	BA	PA	MA	YA	RA	WA
イ	キ	ギ	シ	ジ	チ	ヂ	ニ	ヒ	ビ	ピ	ミ		リ	
I	KI	GI	SHI	Ji	CHI	Ji	NI	HI	BI	PI	MI		RI	
ウ	ク	グ	ス	ズ	ツ	ヅ	ヌ	フ	ブ	プ	ム	ユ	ル	ン
U	KU	GU	SU	ZU	TSU	ZU	NU	FU	BU	PU	MU	YU	RU	N
エ	ケ	ゲ	セ	ゼ	テ	デ	ネ	ヘ	ベ	ペ	メ		レ	
E	KE	GE	SE	ZE	TE	DE	NE	HE	BE	PE	ME		RE	
オ	コ	ゴ	ソ	ゾ	ト	ド	ノ	ホ	ボ	ポ	モ	ヨ	ロ	ヲ
O	KO	GO	SO	ZO	TO	DO	NO	HO	BO	PO	MO	YO	RO	WO

JLPT Level 4 (N5) Kanji (100 in all)

一	二	三	四	五	六	七	八	九	十	百	千	万
ichi	ni	san	yon	go	roku	shichi	hachi	kyuu	juu	hyaku	sen	man
人	子	男	女	日	月	火	水	木	金	土	大	小
person	child	man	woman	sun	moon	fire	water	tree	money	ground	big	small
上	下	左	右	入	出	中	外	前	後	多	少	半
up	down	left	right	in	out	inside	outside	front	back	many	few	half
口	目	手	足	耳	円	本	花	店	川	山	車	道
mouth	eye	hand	foot	ear	yen	book	flower	store	river	mountain	car	street
父	母	友	今	午	時	週	年	何	北	南	東	西
father	mother	friend	now	noon	hour	week	year	what	north	south	east	west
行	来	見	聞	言	話	語	読	書	買	学	分	休
go	come	see	hear	say	talk	language	read	write	buy	learn	understand	rest
食	飲	生	立	会	占	新	高	安	長	間	先	毎
eat	drink	live	stand	meet	old	new	high	safety	long	interval	previous	each
駅	校	社	国	名	電	天	気	空	魚	雨	白	
station	school	company	country	name	electricity	heaven	spirit	sky	fish	rain	white	

Japanese Cheat Sheet

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は

WA - Topic Marker

- Marks the topic of a **sentence**. (non-grammatical)
- **Contrasts** one option or thing from others.
- Used when stating factual information.

kuruma wa **watashi** ga unten shimashta.
As for the car, I drove it.

Tanaka-san wa o-kane o motte imasu.
Mr. Tanaka has money. (he is rich)

が

GA - Subject Marker

- Marks the subject of a **verb**. (grammatical)
- **Separates / calls out** one option or thing from others.
- Used when relating a chain of events.
- Used when describing specific things with adjectives.
- Marks objects of potential form verbs. (can/table)
- Connects clauses with a meaning of "but" or "despite."

nihongo ga **nukoshi** hanasemasu.
(I) can speak Japanese a little.

Tanaka-san ga o-kane o motte imasu.
Mr. Tanaka has the money. (with him now)

WA vs. GA (Detailed Article) - <http://nihonshock.com/waga>

を

O - Object Marker

- Marks the object of a verb.
- With verbs of motion, shows where the motion occurs.

kutsu o kaimashita.
(I) bought shoes.

sora o tobu
To fly (in) the sky

jibun no koto o hanasu
To talk about (things of) one's self.

に

NI - The "Aiming" Particle

- Marks an indirect object (the person/thing an action is done for/directed toward)
- Marks a destination, direction or specific place for an action. (to/for)
- Marks a specific point in time (ie. Monday / 3pm / 1972 / July)
- Marks a period of time that something repeats in. (ie. twice a week)
- Marks direct objects for: **naru** (to become), **au** (to meet), **noru** (to ride)

kanojo ni hon o agemashita.
(I) gave her a book.

doyoubi ni kouen ni aimashou.
Let's meet at the park on Saturday.

shinidai ni ko-hi o nihai nomimasu.
(I) drink 2 cups of coffee a day.

と

TO - The "Binding" Particle

- Marks a person that an action is done with.
- Links nouns to create a complete "and" group.
- Marks quoted speech or complete ideas.
- Shows a natural, predictable "if-then" relationship between clauses.
- Marks onomatopoeic words. (words that mimic sounds)

bossu to joushi to kenka shimashta.
(I) had an argument with (my) boss and manager.

sore wa chigau to omoimasu.
(I) think that's incorrect.

kosokoso to hanasu
to speak in whispers

で

DE - The "Enabling" Particle

- Marks a place, area, or length of time inside which something occurs.
- Marks a method/tool or condition/state for an action.
- Marks a material or substance, composition.

kanji o ninen de oboemashita.
(I) learned kanji in two years.

kyou wa densha de kimashita.
Today (I) came by train.

yomou de tsukurareta mafura.
a scarf made of wool

も

MO - Even/Also Marker

- Used with other particles to add a meaning of "also/too" or "even." (In this usage, MO replaces WA, GA, and O completely, but follows all other particles)
- Turns interrogative words (doko, dare, itsu, etc.) into every~all~ words.

Osaka ni mo ikimashita.
(I) also/even went to Osaka.

mushi shite mo ii desu yo. ikare wa itsumo sou desu.
It's okay even if (you) ignore (him). He is always like that.

か

- Marks a sentence as a question.
- Links nouns to create an "or" group.
- Turns interrogative words into some~ words.

dare (who) + ka = dareka (someone)

へ

- Can be used instead of NI to mark a destination.

へ

Note: "ikagawa" (to) is used.

の

- Shows possession. (watashi no = my/mine)
- Combines two nouns.

Note: the final noun becomes the "primary" meaning.

kaisha no kuruma = the company car
kuruma no kaisha = a car company

や

- Links nouns to create an incomplete "and" group.

や

hon ya emitsu
books and pencils (and such)

だけ

DAKE

- Marks a limited amount or extent of something.
- Used with **dekiru** (and other potential verbs) to mean "as ~ as possible"

ichijikan dake matte kudasai.
Please wait for just one hour.

dekiru dake hayaku kaite kudasai.
Please write it as quickly as you can.

しか

SHIKA

- Marks an extent or amount that the speaker thinks small/insufficient.
- Always used with a negative verb form.

watashi wa sen'en shika mottetamaseb.
I haven't but one thousand yen.

ほど

HODO

- Marks a degree or extent of something.
- Marks an approximate length of time.
- Marks the greater element in a negative comparison.

sono kuruma wa kono kuruma hodo hayakunai desu.
That car is not as fast as this car.

hara ga itaku natta hodo warawamashita.
I laughed so hard that my stomach became painful.

より

YORI

- Marks the lesser element in a positive comparison.
- "From ~" (when closing a private letter)

sono kuruma wa kono kuruma yori hayai desu.
That car is faster than this car.

でも

DEMO

- Marks a possibility or suggestion.
- Turns interrogative words into any~ words.
- (Used as an interjection) means "even so/but/however"

ocha demo nomimashou ka?
Shall we drink some tea or something?

itsudemo denwa shite kudasai.
Please call me anytime.

くらい

KURAI

- Marks an approximate or negotiable degree, amount, or length of time.
- Can also be pronounced **gurai**.

kanji o juukai gurai kakiru to, wasurenai yo.
If you write a kanji about 10 times, you won't forget it.

ばかり

BAKARI

- Means "only," or "to the exclusion of other things"
- Can be pronounced **bakka/bakkari** for emphasis.

ano kyoushitsu wa onna no ko bakari imasu.
That classroom has nothing but girls in it.

から

KARA

- Marks a starting place or time.
- Marks a source of information.

tomodachi kara kikimashita.
I heard about it from a friend.

kaigi wa ichi kara sanji made desu.
the meeting is from 1 o'clock until 3 o'clock.

まで

MADE

- Marks an ending place or time.
- When followed by ni, means "by/before"

itsuyoubi made ni repo-to o kaite kudasai.
Please write the report by Wednesday.

COMMON GRAMMATICAL WORDS / PATTERNS

HAZU

Expectation

ikare wa sensei akakara shiteiru hazu desu.
He is a teacher, so he should know.

BEKI

Appropriacy

zaimon o chanto harau beki desu.
You should pay your taxes properly.

WAKE

Reality

kaite waite de wa nai kedo totemo tanoshikatta.
Even though I didn't win, it was very fun.

TSUMORI

Intend to...

shikudai o suru tsumori datta kedo...
I intended to do my homework, but...

DAKE DE WA NAKU

Not only...

kanojo wa karute dake de wa naku joudou mo dekiru.
She can do not only karate, but judo too.

WAKE NI WA IKENAI

Must not...

akirameru wake ni wa ikenai.
I mustn't give up.

~ HOU GA

Comparison

densha de ita hoo ga yatsu desu.
It would be cheaper to go by train.

~EBA ~U HODO

The more you~

yareba yaru hodo tsuyaku naru.
The more you do it, the better you become.

KA MO SHIRENAI

Possibility

kyou Satou-san kara denwa ga aru ka mo shirenai.
There might be a phone call from Mr. Satou today.

NO YOU NI/NA

Similarity

kedomo no you ni naku. jomori no you na niai.
To cry like a child. To smile like an adult.

VERBS FOR GIVING AND RECEIVING

	I give	I receive	You give to me
Informal	ageru	morau	kureru
Humble	sashiageru	itadaku	kudasaru*

(* kudasaru = kudasaru + kudasaru)

① : also marks objects of **wakaru** (understand), **hoshii desu** (want), and **suki desu** (like).

② : kyou (today), ashita (tomorrow), kinou (yesterday), etc. do not take NI.

③ : a TO group lists all its members, YA only names some.

④ : the speaker thinks the amount/degree is neutral or considerable in size.

⑤ : the speaker thinks that the exactness of the number or amount is not important.

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